

**THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. An apparatus comprising:
  - a towing vessel having a bow, a stern, opposing starboard and port gunwales and an operator's station between the gunwales;
  - a skeletal towing frame attached to the vessel for supporting an elevated tow rope attachment point substantially above the vessel, wherein a first, generally vertical support attached to the starboard gunwale, a second, generally vertical support attached to the port gunwale, and wherein the first and second supports have sufficient length so that vertical extremities thereof extend substantially above the vessel, a third support attached to the vessel forward of the first and second supports, with the third support extending upwardly and aft, and wherein the third support is spaced from the first and second supports a sufficient distance to impart stability to the skeletal towing structure, and wherein upper portions of the first, second and third supports are coupled with a generally horizontal bridging portion; and
  - a tow rope attachment point fitted with the bridging portion.
2. The apparatus recited in claim 1, wherein each of the first and second supports are rotatably attached to the respective starboard and port gunwales of the vessel so that at least a portion of each of the first and second supports is rotatable into a horizontal storage position.
3. The apparatus recited in claim 1, wherein the bridging portion includes at least one generally horizontal member extending laterally across and spaced above the vessel.
4. The apparatus recited in claim 3, wherein the tow rope attachment point is generally positioned above the operator's station.

5. The apparatus recited in claim 1, wherein the first, second and third supports are rigid members.